

Officers Russell and Eberhart are SILEC /SIPCA) Telecommunicators of the Year

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January 31 2018 2:08 PM



EDWARDSVILLE - Recently, Edwardsville Police Department's Michelle Russell and Jason Eberhart received the Southern Illinois Law Enforcement Commission and Southern Illinois Police Chiefs Association (SILEC/SIPCA) Telecommunicators of the Year Award.

Russell and Eberhart were honored for their lifesaving response to an overdose call in October.

Edwardsville Police Chief Jay Keeven said he was extremely proud every day of the work of Russell, Eberhart and all his department's employees.

"It's nice when that work is recognized by the SILEC/SIPCA," he said. "The truth of the matter is, our dispatchers are often the unsung heroes. They do amazing work each and every day and are directly responsible for keeping our citizens and officers safe."

Below is a brief description of their actions. On October 1, 2017, Dispatcher Russell took a 911 call from an 18-year-old female who had overdosed. The female caller was located in a wooded area near the Madison County Bike Trail. The caller was not able to provide her specific location as a result of her physical condition, nor was she able to walk to an area where emergency personnel could easily locate her.

During the 38-minute call, dispatcher Russell utilized her training and experience to keep the caller calm, while both dispatchers Russell and Eberhard concentrated their efforts on directing personnel to the search area. Both dispatchers made use of their experience and available resources to direct help to the caller. Dispatcher Russell's calm and professional demeanor kept the female caller speaking, even as the caller began to lose consciousness. The actions of both dispatchers Russell and Eberhard not only assisted with locating the female caller, but ultimately resulted in potentially saving her life. All this occurred while they were handling other emergency calls.